Choosing and developing leaders who can enable, facilitate, inspire and sustain high levels of performance is a strategic challenge for organisations.

How to make sense of the leadership landscape

L&D and HR teams are faced with a densely populated leadership landscape, crowded with providers, models, “best practice” approaches and the latest theories.

They must also deal with a post-financial crisis reality – doing more with shrinking resources, often against the background of a tired workforce. Making sense of the options can prove time consuming and difficult, sometimes resulting in development that does not align optimally with strategic, cultural and individual needs.

A one-size fits all approach rarely works

We believe leadership can be learnt, and that this development is contextual – it must be responsive to business and individual drivers. Truly sustainable development and real value is very rarely delivered with a one-size fits all approach.

We also believe leadership occurs at all levels in an organisation – not just at the top – and that it is artificial to separate leadership from management. They are two sides of the same coin. These principles form the basis of our approach to leadership development and underpin how we help clients make the right choices.
A framework to make sense of your priorities and identify the best options

So just how do you make sense of the leadership landscape? We recommend using an organising framework to understand your priorities and then establish the best tools, techniques and learning options to deliver sustained performance improvement at all levels.

We have successfully used this framework with leading clients to do just that.

The Five Dimensions of Leadership

An insight into the five dimensions of the framework

Each dimension is mapped to core competencies and learning options. These in turn are proven against the frameworks of the Institute of Leadership and Management (ILM) and the Chartered Management Institute (CMI).

The dimensions overlap and any of them can be used as a starting point:

**Personal Leadership**

Leaders need to ask “Who am I and who do I want to be? What personal growth and development do I need; what are my commitments and aspirations for self-improvement?” Leaders must role model the values of the organisation, to demonstrate personal credibility and to create a culture of trust.

Perhaps the most important relationship leaders have is with themselves. Knowing their own strengths and the qualities and skills they bring to their role. Being self-motivating and self-supportive. Making reflection a regular discipline in their life as a leader – ensuring they learn from what they do and from the way in which it is done.

**Business acumen**

Having a clear vision, a dynamic strategy and a robust and disciplined approach to business planning. How effectively do leaders take account of the external and internal environment? Beyond creating the vision, can they communicate and articulate it to others, and engage them on the way?

“We stand on a burning platform. There is intense heat coming from our competitors. When they poured flames on our market share, what happened at Nokia? We fell behind, we missed big trends and we lost time. Our company has lacked accountability and leadership.” This is part of the message that Stephen Elop, the CEO of Nokia sent to his staff. He recognised that, in the smartphone market, the company had ‘fallen years behind’ its rivals Apple and Google.

An absence of leadership in this dimension of the framework can put an entire company and the livelihood of all of its people at risk.

“Perhaps the most important relationship leaders have is with themselves.”

**Organisational leadership**

How do leaders drive the day-to-day operations of the business? Achieving operational excellence – lean processes, efficient structures, optimal resource management and outstanding delivery – requires leaders and managers to examine and improve how they operate and align with strategic objectives.

Andy Street, Managing Director of John Lewis, stays closely connected to the day-to-day operation of the business. Deep in the culture is what he calls, ‘a restless nagging away to be better’. That pursuit of excellence permeates every aspect of how the company is organised and how it operates – from supply chain management to decisions on how stock is displayed.

Ask any member of the John Lewis team in any part of the store and they will know the current sales figures in their department. Big picture and clarity on strategic intent are of critical importance. So too is driving that strategy down to the sharp end. To the people who meet the customer and make the sale.
LEADERSHIP DEVELOPMENT: 
A FRAMEWORK TO IDENTIFY PRIORITIES AND MAKE THE RIGHT CHOICES

Interpersonal leadership
The key question here for all leaders is “Who’s coming with you?” Because a leader without followers is lonely. Because they really are only as good as their team. The interpersonal dimension of the model is about the nature of the relationship leaders have with other people - their own people being the most critically important. How strong are the internal and external networks they need to engage with stakeholders at all levels? How do they get things done through others, successfully and sustainably?

Dick Fuld, CEO of Lehman Brothers had a nickname – ‘The Gorilla’. Which tells us something about his leadership style. Join the cult of the charismatic CEO and many illicit pleasures will be yours. The joy of striding purposefully down a corridor whilst berating some cowed and frightened member of your management team. The ego-boosting buzz to be had from dominating, intimidating and humiliating others. The only downside, as Dick Fuld found, will be that as your company crashes to the biggest corporate loss in the history of your country, you have no allies and so supporters.

“Interpersonal leadership
The interpersonal dimension of the model is about the nature of the relationship leaders have with other people – their own people being the most critically important.”

Innovation and learning
How committed are leaders to their own development and the development of others? To what extent must they provide thought leadership and encourage, harness creativity and innovation? How do they lead and embrace change - doing things better tomorrow than they did today?

Sometimes innovation is about entirely new products and services that create new markets and meet latent needs that buyers and consumers did not even know they had. Sometimes innovation is a brand-new ‘disruptive technology’ that creates new industries and new ways of doing business. Just as important and just as valuable is building learning and innovation into your daily practice as a leader and into the continuing, incremental development of your organisation.

If the quality of leadership is measured by performance, what Sir John Rose achieved in his fifteen years as CEO of Rolls Royce is remarkable. Productivity, measured by turnover per employee, increased from £83,000 to £263,000 per head. An order book increased in value from under £8bn to more than £60bn. A share price increased from £1.88 to £6.40.

The ‘transformation’ led by Sir John Rose was not sudden and immediate. It was not a revolution. It was achieved by making learning and innovation a day-to-day, ever-present reality; by building a business focused on doing better tomorrow what it did well today; by everyone making a personal commitment to continuous improvement and the sharing of knowledge and learning.

Putting the framework into action – a partnership
You are the expert when it comes your organisation – no external provider will understand your culture, drivers and challenges better than you. Insist on a partnership approach – the essence of which is that you define and choose, your partner advises, supports and provides. The framework forms the basis for this approach.

That’s how we work at FTI Consulting – in partnership with you and your colleagues, transparently and with a commitment to deploy the best of both your resources and ours as efficiently as possible.

Karen Hulme
Managing Director
+44 (0)20 8371 7026
karen.hulme@fticonsulting.com

Matthew Solon
Managing Director
+44 (0)20 8371 7044
matthew.solon@fticonsulting.com

Angie Gorman
Managing Director
+1 312 428 2673
angie.gorman@fticonsulting.com

Victoria Graefin Strachwitz
Managing Director
+49 69 92037 185
victoria.strachwitz@fticonsulting.com

About FTI Consulting
FTI Consulting is an independent global business advisory firm dedicated to helping organisations manage change, mitigate risk and resolve disputes; financial, legal, operational, political & regulatory, reputational and transactional. FTI Consulting professionals, located in all major business centres throughout the world, work closely with clients to anticipate, illuminate and overcome complex business challenges and opportunities.

The views expressed in this article are those of the author(s) and not necessarily the views of FTI Consulting, its management, its subsidiaries, its affiliates, or its other professionals.

www.fticonsulting.com

© 2017 FTI Consulting, Inc. All rights reserved.